

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently amended). A process for the preparation of a recombinant polypeptide, comprising the steps of

a) fermenting a prokaryotic host cell in a fermentation medium, the host cell comprising a periplasm and being transformed with a recombinant expression system capable of effecting secretion of the polypeptide into the periplasm, wherein the fermentation is performed in ~~[[a]]~~ the fermentation medium under conditions such that the polypeptide is secreted into the periplasm of the host cell, and

b) interrupting the further processing of the host cell in the fermentation medium ~~harvest broth~~ and maintaining the medium ~~[[it]]~~ under defined conditions of temperature and pH prior to extraction of the polypeptide.

Claim 2 (Canceled).

Claim 3 (Currently amended). A process according to claim 1, wherein the further processing of the fermentation medium ~~harvest broth~~ is interrupted for ~~a period of from~~ about one hour to about 72 hours.

Claim 4 (Currently amended). A process according to claim 1, wherein the further processing of the fermentation medium ~~harvest broth~~ is interrupted for ~~a period of from~~ about 12 hours to about 48 hours.

Claim 5 (Currently amended). A process according to claim 1, wherein the further

processing of the fermentation medium harvest broth is interrupted for ~~a period of~~ from about 12 hours[,]) to about 24 hours ~~or about 48 hours~~.

Claim 6 (Currently amended). A process according to claim 1, wherein the interruption of the further processing of the fermentation medium harvest broth is performed at a temperature of from about 2°C to about 65°C.

Claim 7 (Currently amended). A process according to claim 1, wherein the interruption of the further processing of the fermentation medium harvest broth is performed at a temperature of from about 4°C to about 25°C.

Claim 8 (Currently amended). A process according to claim 1, wherein the interruption of the further processing of the fermentation medium harvest broth is performed at a temperature of ~~about 4°C; from~~ about 10°C; ~~about 15°C; about 20°C or to~~ about 25°C.

Claim 9 (Currently amended). A process according to claim 1, wherein the pH ~~value~~ of the fermentation medium harvest broth is maintained ~~between at a pH of~~ from about 4 to about 10 during step b).

Claim 10 (Currently amended). A process according to claim 1, wherein the pH ~~value~~ of the fermentation medium harvest broth is maintained ~~between at a pH of~~ from about 5 to about 9 during step b).

Claim 11 (Currently amended). A process according to claim 1, wherein the pH ~~value~~ of the fermentation medium harvest broth is maintained ~~between at a pH of~~ from about 6 to about 8 during step b).

Claim 12 (Currently amended). A process according to claim 1, wherein the pH ~~value~~ of

the fermentation ~~medium harvest broth~~ is maintained at about 7 during step b).

Claim 13 (Currently amended). A process according to claim 1, wherein the further processing of the fermentation ~~medium harvest broth~~ is interrupted for a ~~period of from~~ about 12 hours, ~~about 24 hours or to~~ about 48 hours ~~and~~ at a temperature of ~~from~~ about 4°C, ~~about 10°C, about 15°C, about 20°C or to~~ about 25°C.

Claim 14 (Previously presented). A process according to claim 1, wherein the fermentation ~~medium harvest broth~~ is concentrated prior to step b).

Claim 15 (Previously presented). A process according to claim 1, wherein the fermentation ~~medium harvest broth~~ is concentrated by centrifugation or micro filtration prior to step b).

Claim 16 (Currently amended). A process according to claim 1, wherein step b) is performed in ~~[[the]]~~ a fermenter.

Claim 17 (Currently amended). A process according to claim 1, wherein the prokaryotic host cell ~~[[is]]~~ comprises a Gram-negative bacterium.

Claim 18 (Original). A process according to claim 17, wherein the Gram-negative bacterium is selected from the group consisting of *Escherichia sp.*, *Pseudomonas sp.*, *Enterobacter sp.*, *Erwinia sp.*, *Campylobacter sp.*, *Proteus sp.*, *Aeromonas sp.* and *Vitreoscilla sp.*

Claim 19 (Currently amended). A process according to claim 17, wherein the Gram-negative bacterium ~~[[is]]~~ comprises *Escherichia coli*.

Application No. 10/568,329
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Claim 20 (Currently amended). A process according to claim 1, wherein the recombinant polypeptide is selected from the group consisting of an antibody, a hormone [[or]], and an immunomodulating agent.

Claim 21 (Currently amended). A process according to claim 1, wherein the recombinant polypeptide is selected from the group consisting of a growth hormone, a growth factor, an interferon, a cytokine, an enzyme, an enzyme inhibitor [[or]], and an antibody fragment.

Claim 22 (Currently amended). A process according to claim 1, wherein the recombinant polypeptide is selected from the group consisting of a Fab-fragment, human growth hormone, interferon alpha-2b [[or]], and granulocyte colony-stimulating factor.

Claim 23 (Canceled).